

**Historic Building Appraisal**  
**Chan Ancestral Hall**  
**No. 25 Ho Chung First Lane, Sai Kung**

Ho Chung (蠔涌), which literally means “a river of oysters”, is one of the three Punti (本地) villages in Sai Kung founded by the Lai (黎) clan in the late Ming (明, A.D. 1368-1644) Dynasty. Following the Lais, the village was also inhabited by the Cheungs (張), the Wans (溫) and the Chans (陳). The Chans were the last settlers.

*Historical  
Interest*

In olden days, Ho Chung was regarded as the centre of an inter-village grouping known as Ho Chung Tung (蠔涌洞) which owned the Che Kung Temple (車公廟) in the area. This grouping, made up of Ho Chung, Nam Pin Wai (南邊圍), Mok Tse Che (莫遮峯), Tai Lam Wu (大籃湖), Man Wo (蠻窩), Tai Po Tsai (大埔仔) and Sheung Sze Wan (相思灣), was also called Ho Chung Seven Villages (蠔涌七鄉). All of these villages were Punti and the Hakkas of the area had no share with this grouping, although their relationship with the Punti villages had always been amicable.

Chan Lei-cheung (陳麗章), a businessman living at Nantou of Guangdong province (廣東南頭) moved to Ho Chung after marrying a girl bearing the surname Wan (溫) from Ho Chung. Chan Lei-cheung and his descendents began their settlement in Ho Chung in the 1850s. The Chans were farmers of rice and vegetable growing and cattle, pig and poultry rearing. If the harvest was good in a given year, the surplus of crops would be sold at the Sai Kung Market. The **Chan Ancestral Hall** (陳氏家祠), also called **Tung Shing Tong** (同盛堂), is situated at No. 25 Ho Chung First Lane (蠔涌1巷25號). It was probably built in the **1850s**.

Located in the front row of the sizable village, the ancestral hall is facing south-east to the river. It is a medium-sized Qing (清) vernacular building having a one-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. The open courtyard is in front of the main hall. The middle bay of the courtyard and main hall is flanked by side rooms and chambers on either side. Cocklofts are on the side chambers of the side bays. The building is constructed of green bricks and granite blocks with its walls to support its timber rafters, purlins and clay tiles. The internal walls are plastered and painted. The lower courses of the external walls are of granite blocks. The front ridge of the recessed entrance is with a pair of geometric mouldings decorated with tiny lions. The rear ridge is with a red geometric moulding on its left end (the right one is missing). Mouldings of lotus, flowers

*Architectural  
Merit*

and rocks are on the wall friezes of the front façade. The gable walls are with red curling mouldings of floral and clouds patterns. Its main hall is decorated with a finely carved wooden *huazhao* (花罩) and screens of flowers and birds, Double Happiness (囍) and interlocking patterns. The altar at the end wall of the hall is a gilded wooden finely-carved one with the theme of Two Phoenixes Adoring the Sun (雙鳳朝陽). A soul tablet of the Chan ancestors is in the middle for worship. The wall friezes under the internal eaves are with curling black-and-white auspicious clouds and dragons pattern.

The ancestral hall is the only ancestral hall in the multi-clan village. It is to remind the settlement of the Chans in Ho Chung village. **Rarity**

The highly decorated ancestral hall with fine wall paintings, mouldings and carvings is of high built heritage value. The side rooms and chambers are not properly upkept with the use of ceramic floor tiles and others. This would diminish the authenticity of the building. **Built Heritage Value Authenticity**

The hall serves as a place for ancestral worship of the Chan ancestors. Special offerings were made at festivals including the Chinese New Year, Ching Ming Festival (清明節) and others to the ancestors at the hall. After the offerings a lavish banquet would be held at the hall. Dim Dang (點燈) ritual would be held at the hall for new born baby boys of previous year by lighting lanterns from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> of the first lunar month. The Chans also take part in the Da Chiu (打醮) festival held once every ten years of the village. **Social Value, & Local Interest**

The Chan Ancestral Hall is the only existing ancestral hall in the village. Situated around the Hall are newly constructed village houses. The Hall is a rare typical building constructed with green bricks in this village. A historic item known as Che Kung Temple at Ho Chung Road (蠔涌道車公古廟) is situated near the Hall. **Group Value**